

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 322-3778



December 16, 1980

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I- 132-80

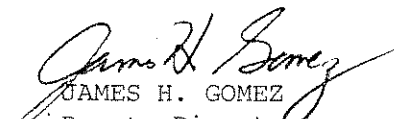
TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADOPTION AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Brochure: "Adopting Today's Children"

REFERENCE:

The attached brochure, "Adopting Today's Children", was developed by the Department of Social Services and has been in use by the California Adoption Services for the past year. Because it emphasizes the "special needs" child, it may be of special interest to public adoption agencies. We recently have received inquiries from county agencies regarding the brochure's availability for their use. In response, we have printed a supply which is now available.

If your agency feels it would be able to make use of the publication as a part of its initial orientation of applicants for adoption, you may order the number you need by submitting your request to the Department of Social Services Warehouse and following the same procedures using the County Forms Order (GEN 727-B) as when ordering other forms. If you have any questions, please contact Robert Green, Relinquishment Adoptions Bureau at (916) 322-3778.


JAMES H. GOMEZ
Deputy Director

Attachment

cc: CWDA

Q. If I am interested in adopting a child, whom do I contact?

A. You may contact the following office:

or you may contact your county welfare or Social Services Department.

Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap, religion, political affiliation, marital status and sex in the administration of this program.

February 1980

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
State of California

MARIO OBLEDO, Secretary
Health and Welfare Agency

MARION J. WOODS, Director
Department of Social Services



**Child Welfare
Today's
Adoption**



Q. Why do you need adoptive parents? I hear you have no babies.

A. It is true there are few babies -- even preschool age children -- waiting for adoption. There are, however, many school age children who need families. Of course, children who become available for adoption at this age have often had life experiences that have been unhappy for them. Some of these children are brothers and sisters who need to grow up together. Some of the children are of minority background. Some have problems in school. Some have physical problems which affect their activities. What we are seeking are average families who are happy together and want a child or children to enjoy their family life.

Q. Do we have to own our home or have a large bank account?

A. No. Our expectation is that the family's financial situation is reasonably stable.

Q. Must I be married?

A. No. We seek out single parent applicants for children who can best adjust to a single parent home. For those children who need to have both a mother and a father, we are seeking couples who have a stable, happy family situation.

Q. How long must we be married before we adopt?

A. The important thing is not the length of the marriage but its demonstrated stability. In addition, the parents' experience in dealing with children is an important factor.

Q. What qualities or characteristics are you looking for in families who want to adopt children?

A. We are looking for active, friendly, outgoing families whose members are comfortable together. A sense of humor and the ability to deal with new experiences are important characteristics. We especially need racial minority families. We particularly welcome inquiries from Mexican-American, Black

and American Indian families. We like to place a child with a family of the same racial background, but are often unable to do because too few families with these backgrounds apply to adopt children.

Q. How much do you charge to adopt?

A. The regular fee is \$500, which is subject to the family's ability to pay. In some instances we can reduce or waive the fee entirely.

Q. If we adopt a child with medical problems, how could we pay for extensive medical care if we are unable to do so?

A. Funds are available to meet the special needs of adoptive children for a period of time up to five years.

Q. What is involved in adopting a child?

A. An adoption agency or the California Adoption Service can be contacted. An agency representative is available to discuss with you the type of child you wish and the kinds of children who are available and the requirements for adopting a child.

If our preliminary discussions with you indicate that you have a potential for providing a home for an available child and you have an interest in such a child, then you may be selected for further consideration. Such consideration involves a family study.

Q. What is a family study?

A. The family and the adoption worker talk together to reach an understanding of the family's interests and capabilities. Together, they determine the kind of child who would best fit into that particular family. The family provides references and reviews its financial and health conditions. A study generally takes 4 - 6 months and involves several home and/or office interviews and/or group meetings.

Q. After the family study is completed, how long will it take us to get a child?

A. Each situation is unique. As a rule, the agency will attempt to find the right child for the particular family, for about one

year. Some families, however, will have a child placed with them almost immediately upon completion of the study.

Q. After I receive the child, how long does it take to receive final approval of the child's adoption?

A. The usual period between the child's placement in his/her adoptive home and adoption finalization in court is about one year.

Q. We think we want to adopt but have no experience with children. What do you suggest?

A. There are many child-oriented activities available in even the smallest community. Some of these involve sports coaching and organization such as Scouts or Campfire Girls. Others include church and school volunteer activities. Some families may be interested in becoming foster parents to children who need temporary care. They can apply through their local county welfare or Social Service Department.

Q. If an adoptive child is placed in our home, is there any help to assist us in fitting the child into our family?

A. Again, the family and the adoption worker will develop a practical plan together to work out any difficulties that might occur.

Q. How is the child selected for our family?

A. The family and the adoption worker together make this decision.

Q. Questions often raised by the general public relate to the identification of natural parents by an adult adoptee or by natural parents wanting to know what happened to their child who was relinquished for adoption years ago.

A. Under present state laws, we are prohibited from giving specific identifying information as to the name of the natural parent of the adoptee or the new name of the adoptee and where each lives. However, adoption agencies can share background and other nonidentifying information that is available.